

Honor Guard

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Summary: Silverbolt mysteriously turns on his Maximal comrades.

Honor Guard

Silverbolt aimed a pistol at Optimus Primal. "Sir, I'm afraid I can't do that."

"Be logical," pleaded Optimus as he placed hands on hips. "You're surrounded and we need to enter that cave."

"Can't I just wing `im?" asked Rattrap. Optimus silenced him with a scowl.

Silverbolt stayed put. "I made a promise not to let anyone in. That includes you."

Optimus stepped forth a pace. "The Axalon's sensors detected a source of Energon in this cave, regulated as if it was a power source."

"A power source," Rhinox explained, "that could benefit a Predacon device. This close to our base, it might be spy equipment."

"So you see," said Primal in his most diplomatic tone, "we need to investigate the situation. Our safety depends on it."

"Nope," stated Silverbolt. "You'll have to go back and let me seal off the cave. I made a promise to let no one enter."

"Who did you promise?" asked Cheetor.

"I'm not at liberty to reveal that."

"Promise or not," bellowed Optimus, "We need to get into that cave!"

Silverbolt shook his head. "I'm so sorry to disobey your orders, Sir,

but this is a matter of hon-" The stalwart Maximal stopped mid-sentence and flopped to the ground as a blaster burst sideswiped his head.

Cheetor gasped.

All optics turned to Rattrap, who was blowing smoke from his gun. "You had to send lunkhead ahead as a scout!"

"Rattrap!" wheezed Cheetor.

"Don't worry," Rattrap admonished, "Bowser boy will awake with dizzy spells in under the hour." He cracked his fingers. "Now, why don't I go into that cave and see if anything needs disarmin'."

Optimus sighed. "Very well, Rattrap. But be careful."

"Not a problem," assured the Transmetal rat, who rudely stepped on the unconscious Silverbolt and into the cave.

There were a tense few minutes of clanking sounds as Rattrap did unknown things in the cave.

Primal kept the other two Maximals back and yelled, "Rattrap, what's the status?"

The petite warrior soon poked his head out the cave entrance and winked. "Well, looky here what caused all the fuss." His hand protruded from the entrance and tossed a cylindrical object into the air. As Rattrap came into full view, he caught the object and shined a light under his chin. "Boo! It's a stinkin' flashlight. There was nothing else in there besides rocks and spiders. The Preds might have explored it, but they didn't leave nothing behind."

"Hmm," said Rhinox. "Was that flashlight on when you found it?"

"Yeap."

"I first detected the Energon reading hours ago," stated Rhinox.

"It must be one of those new-fangled, Energon saving, long life models," Rattrap explained. "Well, we better be headin' back."

Primal stepped in front of the retreating Maximal. "Then who did Silverbolt make his promise to? His need to preserve honor was so great that he stood against us. And why would he protect a cave that held nothing but a flashlight? It doesn't add up."

Rattrap shrugged. "Maybe it was he and Blackarachnia's secret love abode. How am I to know?"

Primal and Rhinox exchanged raised eyebrows. "Rhinox," suggested Primal, "There's more here than meets the eye. Let's give that cave our own examination."

"Hey," stammered Rattrap, walking backwards, "I'm insulted! Don't ya trust my abilities?"

Primal smiled and patted Rattrap on the shoulder. "Of course I trust you, Rattrap. But even the slyest rat can miss something."

Rattrap gawked helplessly as the three Maximals marched onward into the cave. Then, he darted forward and tried unsuccessfully to creep ahead past their limbs.

"Whoa!" exclaimed Cheetor.

Primal and Rhinox took in the cave's contents with shock and reverence. Photos, artifacts, crudely made statues and an eternal Energon flame composed a looming shrine to their fallen comrade, Dinobot.

"It's like the Hall of Leaders on Cybertron," gasped Cheetor.

Rhinox watched the eternal flame cast bouncing shadows on the wall. "A fitting tribute to a great warrior."

"And I think I know who made it," claimed Optimus as he stared at a photo gracing the dank wall. The framed picture showed Dinobot standing irritably next to another Maximal who was giving the warrior rabbit ears. "Rattrap, I always knew you cared."

Rattrap snickered and kicked at the dirt. "He had to go and keel over, leaving no one to pick on besides Silverbolt. It's just not the same! He's too nice. When he came across the cave and I made him promise not to reveal it to anyone, I never dreamed he'd pull an Alamo!"

Rattrap waved a dismissive hand. "Anyway, I can come here to get off a few zingers. And Dinobutt can't talk back!"

"Ah, I see," said Optimus with a small smirk. He turned to Rhinox. "Come on, let's get back to the Axalon. Cheetor, help me drag Silverbolt."

"Aye," complied Cheetor.

They exited the cave, but Rattrap paused to sneer at a photo of Dinobot. "In the great beyond and you still manage to stick it to me!" His expression went grave for barely a moment, then he muttered, "See ya around, Chopperface," and was gone.

End
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